

*Characters
in Outline*

J. R. McClymont

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CHARACTERS IN OUTLINE
AND OTHER POEMS



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AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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AUTHOR OF 'METRICAL ROMANCES AND
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CHARACTERS IN OUTLINE

A RELUCTANT JACOBITE

AN unconsidered unit of that band
Which gave its worldly substance to achieve
A brief success for Charles Edward's arms,
Following its constellation from afar,
Had plunged from contemplative country life
Into the twofold war of pen and sword,
And sternly parted bonds of heart and home
To grant to his convictions recompense,
For they had summoned him to speak and act.
He sought the camp, although to him in truth
Dearer by far the snowdrop's innocence,
The holy inspiration of the hills,
The gentle worship of the cloistered dove,
The silent pathos of the mountain tarn.
Full soon the rebels scatter like a crowd
Of wingèd thistle-seeds in wind, whereon
Began pursuit and oft by beck, on moor
Were tragedies enacted of resistance.
Duncan was of the hapless fugitives ;

Wounded and wearied by the rout he found
A cave wherein to hide. But hot pursuit
Grew nothing slacker, and no food remained
When help arrived in unexpected guise,
For, when he had resolved to quit the cave,
Came to his aid a crofter of the strath,
Bringing him food at hazard of his life.

Befel it that by night the crofter came
Dejectedly and with emotion told
That he had met pursuers on the way,
Who, after tempting him with specious words
To indicate retreats of fugitives,
Saying that they were charged to pardon all
Subordinates engaged in the revolt
(But he divined their purpose) had withdrawn,
Saying they knew the means to ope his mouth.
The twain agreed that during the next night
Duncan should quit the cave and seek again
Concealment, whereupon they said farewell.
But Duncan did not find a second lair,
For soldiers who had spied the crofter's path
Sought him and found and, as a rebel knave
In arms against the king, shot through the heart.

A CRUISE IN THE PETREL

I

A BREEZE invites to Arran's isle

But I of Arrans weary,
I'm all intent on Icolmkill,
And Staffa lone and eerie ;

Shake out the mainsail, let her go,
Sing us a ditty cheery ;
(Our skipper sings and can beguile
The moments be they dreary).

To sea ! to sea ! that we may shun
The swirl of Coryvreckan,
The sullen gust from Jura's Paps,
The nicker and the kraken ;

See plunging in the streaming wave
And dancing in the spindrift,
Old Oceanus' grandchild fair
Descended whence the wind rift

And road for Iris has prepared,—
For Iris, Thaumas' daughter,
Unto whom, as bards aver,
Electra's love has brought her.

But higher themes betimes evoke
Our souls' profound emotion
Than idle pagan phantasies
Of earth and air and ocean ;

Iona held sublimer lives
Than Tusculum or Baiaë,
And servants of a greater One—
Down with the sail, I pray ye,

For night is near and off the isle
We'll snugly lie till morning
In fathoms twain and sheltered sound,
With lights the dark adorning.

II

O the fair shore ! the abbey hoar !
The seat of Celtic learning !
At last I stand upon the strand,
The haven of my yearning ;

Here Columb stood, right glad at heart
To see no hills of Derry,
Lest love of Erin, isle of saints,
The love of God should bury.

That well he wrought who runs may read
In life with actions crowded,
Aye mindful of his sacred trust
And septs in darkness shrouded ;

That at the altar of his church
As Matins bell was tolling
He blessing died, dying was blessed
By Brothers past consoling.

Farewells are said in Icolmkill
To oldest, youngest native ;
Aboard ! to-night the Petrel's berth,
Please God, will be in Etive.

AN EMIGRANT RETURNING

A YOUNG and ardent cottar of Strathclyde
Must needs improve antipodean wastes,
Wrestle with stringy-barks and of the steep
Dim gully make a dwelling-place of swine
And antechamber of the king of fruits,—
Pippin and russet in their several kinds ;
There felled he giants sentenced to the flames,
Hoed fern-roots too tenacious of their lives,
Planted the tuber, which to propagate
We wound, till leisure came and blue not green
Was bushman's canopy, and forest brutes
Confessed the prowess of his craft and might.
Not his a restful mind with rest from toil ;
Associations latent but intact
Made known their presence in his inner mind ;
He longed again to grasp his father's hand,
Receive the motherly embrace once more,
And hail companions of his younger days.
These memories, too vivid to be quenched,

Increased in vigour till he could no more
Endure the solitude of forest hut
And home returned, all eager to acclaim
A skilful trip or, wet in vernal showers,
To guddle trout in immemorial pool.

CLYTIE

SIGHS twain from heart our Clytie hove
 (I pray you, Marcus, mark this well),
One floated to the ear of Jove,
 The other sank to Pluto's hell ;

Flout her contention that 'tis right,
 And good and wise the fatal plan,
That love and beauty and delight
 Should be the trinity of Man,

And pause ere made by Clytie bond,
 Lest Clytie steal away thy breath,
For Clytie when most free and fond,
 Walks hand in hand with Sin and Death.

CHLOE

CHLOE loved a youth,
Of an Adonis brother,
Vowed should he be coy
Ne'er to love another ;

But Adonis came
And wooed her with beguiling ;
She, alack, from shame
Frowned not on him smiling ;

Which the lad, intent
Upon his suit preferring,
Saw and straightway bent
His bow with aim unerring ;

Smitten by remorse,
Sprang she in a fountain,
Laid the lad a corse
Pompeii's burning mountain.

TWO CHILDREN OF THE AGE

SHE leads her by the hand
Into a distant land
Of Reason and Revolt,
Where what was old is new
And what was false is true
And every bush a holt ;

She knows not heaven from hell,
Nor where dead people dwell,
And does not understand
How God makes cats and dogs
And boys and sheep and hogs,—
All things on sea and land ;

It wearies her to think
Or scrawl with pen and ink
Dumb symbols in a book ;
This great wide world of things
A dismal shadow flings
She cannot calmly brook.

And she in trust elate,
In honour true and great,
 Eager to aid and serve,—
Rebellion warms her blood
And surges in a flood
 Through every tingling nerve.

TITUS AND GISIPPUS

WHEN Pollio and Calvinus consuls were,
And Lepidus triumvir, and with him
Mark Antony and great Octavius,
The officers one to the prætor haled
Of murder self-accused. ‘Him crucify
On Mons Capitolinus,’ Varro said ;
Whereat one Titus Quintus Fulvius rose,—
A rich and noble citizen of Rome,—
And thus addressed the prætor : ‘I am he
Who slew the man by officers found dead ;
As for this innocent and starving wight,
He implicates himself to compass death.’
Scarce had he ceased to speak, when lo ! a third,
One Publius Ambustus, noted thief
And reprobate, stood forth and loudly cried,
‘I am the murderer and thus it was ;—
This dead Lucilius and myself had robbed
One travelling to Tarentum of his gold,
Which to divide we carried to a grot

Where he now dead unfairly shared the spoil ;
We fought, and I o'ercame ; the beggar there
I saw ; he slept ; I left him to his fate.'
'Unto Octavius take them,' said the judge,
'That which outwits my wit he may discern.'

To great Octavius thus Titus spake :—
'I am of Rome, Octavius, this my friend
Is an Athenian ; at the school we met
Of Aristippus ; Chremes, of my friend
The sire, betrothed him to Sophronia, maid
Of Attic beauty, womanly in mind,
And died. The maid I saw, and longed for more
Than man has longed for maid before or since ;
Reason contends with Passion, Reason wins
But in the conflict this poor body swoons
And falls into a pitiable state.
Gisippus of my sickness sought the cause,
Which I reluctantly declared when he,
With unexampled love, renounced his bride,
And so contrived that on the nuptial night
To me she was committed, not to him.
When that my father died and my affairs
Called me to Rome, need was that she should
know

Whose wife she was. Then, to confusion brought,
She sought her father's house and there abode.
Great clamour rose against us, and in truth
I hardly could appease the multitude
Until I threatened with the might of Rome ;
Sophronia yielded ; and I brought her here ;
Gisippus (let him tell the rest) remained.'

' Most noble Cæsar,' then Gisippus said,
' The Law's baulked vengeance quickly fell on me ,
My goods were confiscated to the state,
Decree of banishment was ratified ;
Beggared, where should I flee but unto Rome
And Titus? At the portal of his house
I waited, hungering for one look, one word ;
But no, he passed me by, scouted my rags ;
At least I thought so, but the issue proves
Me wholly wrong : the rest is known to you.'
' A curious ruse,' quoth Cæsar, ' artifice
More questionable than the gods approve
One has devised, the other carried out ;
But both millstones of heavy ill have ground ;
You have my sympathy, my sympathy
Implies my pardon, but this reprobate——'
' Be pleased, great Cæsar, to extend to him

The pardon graciously bestowed on us.'
'This once and better days I wish you all.'

His sister Fulvia Titus gave to wife
Unto Gisippus, and one half his goods
And Tusculan estate whereon they dwelt ;
His labours told, what need more to relate ?

THE WATER-WITCH

DRIVING her sea-cattle home
Over the sands

A Water-witch, beckoning me,
Cried, 'My parents have sent me to thee,—
My mother a waif of the sea,
My father, a troll of the foam :
Hie ! black, hie ! white, hie ! dun.'

Between the sea and the land
(Dulse was her crown)

She stood and smiled for a sign
That she deigned to be bride of mine ;
'Come hither, ye obstinate kine,'
She cried o'er the yellowing sand,
'Hie ! white, hie ! black, hie ! dun.'

'Wind me this conch loud and well
To call them back,

The sun is about to sink,
His eyes are bleared and blink,
Prithee, dear mortal, bethink
Thee ; blow long that the tones may swell ;
Hie ! dun, hie ! white, hie ! black.'

At sound of the conch her steers
Followed the track
To the sea-front's rocky edge,
And over the seaward ledge
Slid as from gunwale the kedge
With a splash, and the cobble veers.
(' Hie ! white, hie ! dun, hie ! black.')

' 'Tis late, come, take we our way
Seawards,' she said,
Encircling my neck with her arm,—
A wench of voluptuous charm,
At her nod men would brave the alarm
At the breaker or beast of prey ;
(' Hie ! black, hie ! dun, hie ! white ').

Dear Lord, whose voice from afar ?
Whose footsteps speed

Adown the combe and along
The darkening sands, whilst the song
Of the sea-trow lingers among
The pools which the night winds blur?
(‘Hie! dun, hie! black, hie! white.’)

’Twas a maid hasting over the sands
Erst plighted to me,—
A maiden in dire distress,
Forsaken (with shame I confess),
The fisherman’s girl on the ness,
And in anguish she wrung her hands.
(‘Hie! black, hie! dun, hie! white.’)

‘I am nought to thee this day,
But she, alas!
To-night will deaden thy soul,
To-morrow thy body will dole
To the sharks to levy their toll;
Come away, come away, away.’
(‘Hie! white, hie! dun, hie! black.’)

The billows were beating like flails
’Neath sky o’ercast;

No Water-witch stood by my side,
I cherished a mortal bride,
And whispered, 'Leonora, abide,
List ! the voice of the Water-witch wails.'
'Hie ! black, hie ! white, hie ! dun.'

MOSES ON PISGAH

FROM Pisgah's Mount Moses looked down
And saw the battles to be fought,
Tribes to be conquered and the town
With much blood-shedding to be bought.

'Shall I lead on where Baalim's horde
Appeal to him with cruel knife,
Until the Angel of the Lord
Blots out their travesty of life?

Shall I return whither the slave
Drags to its fane the awful sphinx,
Or, child in years, stolid and grave,
To water leeks from hovel slinks?

Nor this, nor that ; the Lord is just,
He knows the weary way I've trod ;
To Michael I commend this dust,
Return, O yearning soul, to God.'

PHILOHEBRÆUS

JEHOVAH digged a ditch
 Around his favourite city ;
From love to wrath his purpose ran,
 From wrath it ran to pity ;

The ditch became a scar
 On Israel's ancient freedom ;
The Lord cast off His shoe
 Over the Land of Edom ;

The scar became a wound
 Dealt to the Lord's Anointed,
And Judah's lamp was quenched
 Before the time appointed.

AN UNRIDDLER

A MOMENT'S span he reads her face,
 Anon the Sphinx is veiled ;
Then set the sun, the moon shone forth,
 The light of reason failed ;

An airy, unsubstantial bat
 With screams besought the Night,
To grant the traveller a boon—
 Not steal his reason quite ;

A zephyr from the lips of Morn
 Approached his brow to fan,
Then melody from Memnon came,
 The Sphinx removed her ban ;

Nile overflowed his banks in joy,
 Corn out of Egypt sprang,
The toiling scarabs ceased to roll
 Their spheres for Memnon sang.

A LOVER'S HOLIDAY

Was ever sunnier day, I think,
But lo, 'tis hardly ended,
When, nursed on darkness' dizzy brink,
A sunnier yet has wended

His way adown the slopes of heaven
In hyaline invested,
The nurseling of the sacred seven,
With gemmed aigrette be-crested ;

To-day the gorse's scent's more sweet
Than yesterday and purer
The linnet's pipe ; a dryad's feet
Flee swiftlier to allure her

Faun quicklier to snatch a kiss
Though not devoid of quaking,—
Comus, ensconced, thinks nought amiss,
But spies, with laughter shaking.

And here is Donald, scorner of pelf,
The pipes across his shoulder,
And Celandine, the fair-haired elf,
Who looks no summer older

Than when we last beside the spring
Met, ere I went to college,—
An heir to all the grace years bring,—
I heir to naught of knowledge.

Cloud-curtained ben, look kindly down,
Lake fairies, hark, befriend me,
This day, ere I return to town,
This day will make or end me.

THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD

No hymn that I can write or sing
Can add, blest Lady, to your name
Or praise or honour, and I bring
An offering in no quest of fame.

I partly comprehend the blame
Thou, mother-heart, acutely know'st,
The cruel and consuming flame
Of sacrifice,—thy Son the Host.

And had I been a Nazarene
I had not lived more close to thee
Than now I do in Bethnal Green,
Far from the waves of Galilee,

And should we meet in Oxford Square
I'd know that Jesus was your son
By pensive eyes, wondrous and rare,
Which keys to holy mysteries won

In depth of dolour none can guess
And British matrons only gauge
Imperfectly and eke confess
A lack of Maries in our age ;

The pigeons in the elm, I think,
Would gently light upon your hands,
And of your holy well would drink,—
Eager as harts in thirsty lands,

And did you bend your eyes on me,
A Nilus lily I would take
And offer ; of your courtesy
You would accept for Egypt's sake.

PENSÉES OF AN IDEALIST

I

THE argosies of Thought
On many waters ride,
But never make the happy port
Where sky encounters tide.

II

Lark, you but bruise your frantic wing
In futile efforts to be free,
Both I who write, and you who sing,
Are devotees of liberty.

Think you no hostile powers withhold
My favourite part on earthly stage?
If skies should fall let truth be told,—
Stale customs pen me in a cage.

III

Castles o' cards must fall,
And e' efforts, the struggle, the striving,
To trich and great and thriving,—
These e' not all in all.

Good en live—for what ends?
The call to the wind, ' Brave brother,
T'se say to the sea, ' Our mother,'
Scæ are of Nature friends.

IV

What realm of spirit
Shall I inherit
Or of matter when time has run,
When boards debar
The evening star
And exclude the morning sun?

Shall my body feed
A noxious weed
Or nourish a limpet's shell?
Shall my soul afire
With vain desire
Regret it lived not well?

Shall the sky be riven ?
Shall a bluer heaven
O'erhang a bluer sea ?
Shall this sky and earth
(Heaven of my birth)
Always my Heaven be ?

V

Clouds which envelop the mountains, mild mothers
of rain,
Spread o'er the heavens and cover the blue
which I ponder in vain,
For I cannot grasp it in thought, I can but sigh
and complain
That the source of an infinite pleasure is source
of an infinite pain.

We are like one another, O cloud overspreading
the sky,
You are only a toy of the air, you are born that
you may die ;
Like the breath of life which fails when a winter
draweth nigh,
Like a pageant of passing thoughts swiftly you
journey by.

VI

When through a summers' day
From flower to flower I wander,
From odour to sweet odour stray
And when at night I ponder
For what great good to pray,
But this I find to say—
Being of nothing fonder—
God grant me such another day.

VII

Aspiring lark which soareth
From prime to evensong,
Mellow thrush which poureth
Forth strophes sweet and long

You, methinks, are learned
In a lore sublime,
You've, methinks, discernèd
What I scarce divine ;

Trill, intone and hover
In gay or solemn key ;
I may yet discover
What you plainly see.

VIII

Gloria in excelsis ;
Hear the holm-thrush say ;
Silent be, ye belfries,
Ring not, chimes, to-day ;
With solemn intonation
Adoramus te,
Whilst in adoration
Silent cattle pray ;
Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus ;
Follows breathless pause ;
Sarum's use and Gaul's use
Fill the hanging shaws ;
We go ; his mass is ended ;
Ite, missa est ;
Benedictus blended
With shadows from the west.

IX

Could we but pierce the cloudy veil
Between the earth and realms of light,
How often would our right prove wrong,
How often would our wrong prove right.

ON PILGRIMAGE

THRICE happy moon, my sun until
A new day rob thee of thy light,
Be still my sun and safely guide
Through the empurpled night.

Thy soft effulgence broadly shed
Upon this highway to the main
Allures me to what anchorage?
To shore uncurs'd of gain

But opulent in love of good
And odorous with the hopes mankind
Has cherished,—here, a temple chaste,
A sanctuary of mind,

There, gardens gay with blossoms rare
Allotted to a common use,
To family and faction's strife
An everlasting truce?

‘Your fancy errs,’ a doubter cries,
‘And dreams of land by Heaven caressed’;
I raise my eyes towards the East,
Lo! Araby the Blest.

A NOVO CRISTÃO

ABRAHÃO dwelt in Lisbon town,—
A wise philosopher he,—
In velvet cap and silken gown
He studied and taught with master's frown
Arts occult and cosmography.

Thought he, 'Those Gentiles to beguile,
Solomon's seas who desecrate,
I will draft a chart with cunning wile
To cause distraction, stir their bile,
Who know not how to navigate ;

He racked his brains with scheming lest
The land of Ophir should be theirs,
And this the issue of his quest,
Three words, these,—' Jahveh Maior Est,'
Wherewith to tangle their affairs.

Far to the south a jagged coast

Bare these three words and two words more—

'*Regnum auriferum*' (long lost,

And he who finds again shall boast

Of gold and gems a goodly store).

Three years sped by ere home there came

One caravel of three which wing

Their way; ice crunched of one the frame,

A waterspout submerged a claim,

The third fetched salted seals and ling.

AN INSTRUCTOR OF YOUTH

HERE a fugitive courser leapt across
The chasm (or cañon, as they say in Spain),
There spun and postured witches to a waltz
Wagnerian centuries ere Wagner lived ;
Or were they forms endowed with seeming life,
Subjective lifeless figments of the mind ?
What said our sage at Bonn ? ‘ Externalized
By mental process,—subtle mode of thought.’
Recall his study chamber and we see
Bare floor, bare walls, bare everything. Remote,
An office stool, and desk whereat he sat
Writing or talking :—‘ Pure philosophy
Procures no festal chamber, does not bring
Colleagues who praise nor critics who detract,
Favours no compromises nor endures,
Popularises nought, ’gainst nought declaims ;
Hence, I am no Professor,—Privat Docent,—
Quite at your service, seminarist erst,
Can you believe it ? Guess what came of that ;

I mocked the exegetist :—‘ Jesus spake
And said, that is to say, opened his mouth
And uttered words.’ Mockery (beyond all sins
Unpardonable) entails expulsion ;
This prattle wearies you ; will’t please you taste
My brother’s own Falernian ? Your health ! ’

A RETURNING COLONIST

THOU Muse of Tasman's isle, afloat
On waters of pellucid blue,
Dispel the silence of remote
But most congenial air and through
The hearts of toilers breathe a rapture new,—

Of toilers in the bush and brake,—
The axeman by the prostrate gum
Nature demands an age to make
Vocal, he but brief hours to dumb
Pipe of its lorikeets and drowsy hum

Of forest bee and cackling laugh
Phalangerine and midnight call
Of spotted owl, whereof the half
Roundeth its fellow tone to fall
Delectable throughout Night's gloomy hall,

From Nature, nurse if nurse in scorn,
Bushmen who wring a crust of bread,
Albeit from overflowing horn
Fowls of the air are freely fed
And for the brutes a plenteous meal is spread.

Farewell, ye forests gaunt and vast,
Ye forest voices which appal,
Vaticinations of a blast
Will make the cerements of all
Dead trees madly to lash their trunks and fall ;

To you, dear angels from on high,
Who, twittering, soothe our troubled hours,
Or from a covert near the sky
Shoot arrow-like in emerald showers,
Teaching new raptures to untutored eye,

Farewell ! I leave you to your loves
In happy thickets and the care
Love brings ; ye vespertinal doves
Where'er your Daphnis wanders, there
In liveliest memories shall you have your share.

EXHORTATION OF A LOVER OF NATURE

LET us hearken to the wise
Doctrine taught from trees and skies ;
The ringdove wedded to the wood
Proclaims the strength of solitude ;
A blackbird preaches from a tree
Merit in peace and probity ;
A swallow twittering o'er a stream
Embodies life's eternal dream ;
As hoots of owls perturb and blight
The silent harmony of night,
So venial faults pollute and stain
His life who follows good amain ;
From the warder of heaven's heart
Do not hold yourselves apart,
For the man who loves his song
In vital action goes not wrong.
Thus the canticles of birds
Teach as much as written words,
And instruct our childhood's days
In the sacrifice of praise.

RESPONSORY LAMENT

‘WHERE, comrade, art thou sleeping?’

‘My vault’s the sea’;

‘And who the loved ones keeping

Watch over thee?’

‘Gulls and a tern are sweeping

By on pinion free.’

‘We bid thee be immortal,

That evermore

When Death from his dim portal

Flings shadows o’er

Us thou mayest chase in sport all

To Hades’ door.

Fell death thou hardly knewest,

Only a light

Euroclydon lo ! blew, lest

Thee, to thy height

Olympic scaling, truest,

Malice should blight.’

VIRAVARA'S SACRIFICE

So fevered was the night that kindly Sleep the
palace fled,
And wakeful lay the king and tossed upon his
curtained bed,—
So still, so mirk the gruesome night, where
Viravara stood
On guard, that to the palace gate should creep no
creature rude,
Man-eating tiger, wandering Thug nor demon
loosed from hell,
Nor any of those creatures wild which in dim
forests dwell.
Sudden a wail is heard, then wailing more and more,
Then silence, then the royal voice, 'Tell me, who
keeps the door?'
'Viravara, my lord the king,' comes back an
answer quick;
'Go, seek the cause of this ado; methinks, a
crime or trick.'

The warrior went, and lo, without the city's studded
gate

A lovely woman on the ground lamenting cruel
fate :

In her left nostril pierced a pearl of price she
wore

(The Rajahputra ne'er had seen beauty distressed
before),

Her kirtle was of finest silk in stripes of white and
green,

Her wrapper of an airier gauze than erstwhile wove
had been,

The pendants at her neck were wrought with more
than mortal art,

And from her eyes there looked a soul in which
Earth had no part.

Touching his head the warrior spake, 'What ails
thee, heavenly maid?'

Said she, 'Great danger threatens one on whom
my hopes are stayed ;

Within three days our gracious king shall die, his
loving queen

Shall innocently be the cause of mourning un-
foreseen.'

'Can aught be done that may avert so undesired
a fate,

For dissolution of the king is danger to the
state ?'

'One means there is,' the lady said, 'the king's
life to prolong,

And thine alone the loyal hand which can avert
this wrong ;

Go, take thy well-belovèd, thy only son and heir,
And with him to the sacred courts of Durga great
repair,

And offer him in sacrifice to that exacting power,
So shall the king be wholly saved from thunder-
clouds which lour,

And live one hundred years or more and thou
great praise shalt gain.'

She spake and vanished and the prince went on
his way in pain.

What hour the surkhar tuti chanteth his morning
lay

To Durga's sculptured shrine three Indian children
wend their way,

Parents are two and one a son, too soon no son
to be,

For Saktidhara deems it joy to let the king go
free,—

Joy, glory, peace and holiness surpassing bliss
divine

To perish by his father's hand. Him cloven to
the chine

The father eyes; 'I follow thee, dear life,' his
latest word,

Then yielding him to Brahma, he falls upon his
sword ;

The wife, bereft of son and spouse, in honour not
undone,

Follows that lonely road and dark travelled by
spouse and son.

The sacrifice thus fully made, news to the king is
brought

Of Viravara, son and wife, a family come to naught ;

'Shall I, unworthy one, survive such excellence
unknown

Before this deed?' Sudraka said, 'No more
delights me throne

Nor empery,' and on himself had laid a hand to slay,

When Durga came and interposed and bade his
sword-arm stay ;

'Thy kingdom shall stand firm, my son, when
other kingdoms fall ;
Do nothing rashly ; can my power not profit thee
in all ?'
' I stay my hand if thou restore my servant and his
kin,
If not, I die.' ' This pleases me,' the goddess
said, ' within
An hour thy friends shall live again.' And so it
came to pass.

The king lay down as if to sleep ; again he called,
' Alas !
Viravara, I heard a woman wail ; hast thou
ascertained the cause ?'
' Liege lord,' the prince replied, ' I found a maid
arrayed in gauze,
Who wept, then vanished ; this is all 'tis needful
thou should'st know.'
To whom the king, ' Most trusty chief, thy
fortunes forward go !
No more art Rajahputra, art Maharajah now ;
Karnata thine,—art my ally, herewith I crown thy
brow.'

THE SONNETS OF
THEOLOGUS

I

A DREAM befell me ; in my dream I saw
Eternity disclosed ; in pleasance hight
Of Sense I was immured ; pleased virgin sight,
Flowers, waters, sunshine, birds and stars ; no flaw
Sullied the pristine vision ; one vast law
In beauty, harmony, and perfect right
Rejoiced ; I knew not that a mirky night
Would gulp the light ; as tiger his keen claw
And snake his fang, things visible hide doom ;
I knew not furthermore that Man is Man's
Pet prey, that what Man spares Death gorges on
As vulture on a carcase, that the tomb
Is cradle of the Possible,—strange plans,
But plans to learn which cannot be foregone.

II

I SOUGHT without the walls to sate my lust
Of knowledge and of learning, sought for grace
To penetrate beyond the wall-girt place
Wherein I dwelt, but from the gates I must
Return, checked by two schoolmen grave and just ;
‘Theologus, homewards thy steps retrace’ ;
‘But Spirit bursts the barriers of Space,
Brings Time to nought’—‘Time makes the mortal
dust
And rids of guardian Space even while he vaunts.’
‘The love of Art can sublimate the mind
Into an essence rarer, more refined
Than Sense.’ ‘Nay, can illusionise,’ quoth one,
‘Such talk is fool’s talk, sirrah ; to thy haunts
Or Earth will lose a captive of the sun.

III

' HEARKEN ! how God came upon earth discern :

First, God exists because we think He doth

(God I could not invent in very troth),

A Son who dwelt with God desired to learn

The fruits of living in their inmost kern,

(More this than Heaven could teach) to gulp
the froth

Of men's experience, even the saline broth

Of woe, which bubbles in a golden urn.

Third, God accredited the curious One

To earth, thus ridding of superfluous sun

Heaven's splendour and a maid (blest be the
maid)

Conceived and brought forth Christ, her days
being weighed ;

How He arrived, a slave and eke a prince,

I will explain, if due heed you evince.

IV

' IN Palestine was Death laid on his bier
 (A manger which was bier and cradle too),
 And there one Jesus, God in Man, first drew
Breath from the uncreated unknown sphere
Of being and was quickened. Silence ! Here
 The missing key to godhood, here the true
 New labours' of incarnate godhead clue ;
If by sin Death came, by holiness 'tis clear
 Comes Life, and Life through suffering becomes
Birth-throe, next death-throe, resurrection last ;
 These be life's stages. Is then carnal need
That all be crucified ? Nay, for Thou hast
 Been, mediatorial Soul ; Thy passion sums
All griefs. But grieve with Him. Thus runs
 my rede.'

V

IN grove embowered a pagan temple stood
Within the circuit of this pleasant ground,
To Ashtareth dedicate wherein a sound
Of incantation offereth new food
For the soul's sustenance. In doubtful mood
I wait within the cella, in which compound
The priestess lingered, triply floral-crowned
With beauty, joy, and love, and me she wooed
To enter the adytum and withdrew
The veil which hides from eyes of neophyte
The sacrificial stone and image fair
Of Ashtareth. What more, who dares declare?
My eyes were dazed and an unearthly light
Caused me to reel and mocked like meteor blue.

VI

THOU art Astarte ; lo, a hymn I bring :

Oft painest thou with blow or bleeding scar

Fond lovers' hearts ; thy bitter favours mar

Even while they plenish, thy sole garnishing

Is sighs and secret tears thy tortures wring

From tender hearts ; do I not feel it jar

Upon the harp of reason that there are

Blind mortals who thy graces sweetly sing ?

“ Demon ” I name thee ; need I justify

The naming ? Men, grey-haired and pale of hue

Who love and suffer hurt for love's sole sake,

Whose visage blanches 'neath her falcon eye,

Appear, learn vengeance, vengeance learn to slake,

Gloat o'er her woe who woe has wrought on you.

VII

ANON I bow before the Mystic Rose,
 Alone of all men's mothers undefiled
 In child-bearing and vital nest of Child,
 Whose enterprize shall be through all the woes
 Of Ebal mount to bear the light which shows
 The way to Heaven from the nursery mild
 Of Mary's breast across the desert wild,
 Whereon the nettle of derision grows.
 But not by her is any answer sent
 To my disconsolate prayer from eager heart.
 But ere I leave the holy house I spy
 Christ's living form depicted by the art
 Of cunning master ; Romans crucify
 His likeness, whereupon a veil is rent.

VIII

AGAIN I dreamt, and lo ! within the mart
 Of the wide world I stood and saw the sale
 Of all its goods desirable by bale
 Or bulk ; those who vended there with art
 Which lied displayed one exemplary part
 As surety for a whole alloyed or frail ;
 Fame, honour, ease, pardon's indulgent veil,—
 These they buy and sell, then juggle and thwart.
 Then was I ware of one prone on the loam,—
 A slave in manacles, who shivereth
 And ever and anon casteth his eyes
 Around the market-place to see who buys ;
 For him an owner comes and leadeth home ;
 Asking, ' Who go ? ' one answers, ' Life and
 Death.'

IX

THE angels had prepared a mystic feast
In banquet-hall built in infinitude,
To which Saint Michael and Saint Gabriel sued
For presence of the heavenly powers from least
To greatest, of each myriad-eyèd beast,
Of spirits of the lamps that aye have viewed
Their images in glassy sea. Indued
For feria these ate angels' food, nor ceased
Until appeared an uninvited one
In guise of slave, of all those feasters banned ;
His entrance bringeth shadows on the face
Of every guest ; 'tis thus his titles run—
'Man Mortal.' Him straightway they all withstand
And thrust to hazards of a neutral place—

X

(A NEUTRAL place whose boundary is hell
The further, paradise the hither side,
Where spectres of the unbaptised abide,
Each bound to each by chains of asphodel) ;
Thither I came, from Heaven thrust as well
As Earth, and wondered what should next
betide ;
Nor wondered long, for, parting, in a wide
And flowery lane the spectral infants fell
Asunder, and in midst thereof there stand
Proserpina and Rhadamanth, who seem
More fair than any vision I had known ;
They ope the manacle on each numb hand,
Saying, ' We set thee free, we can alone,
Grace thou our company and gild our dream.'

XI

'BEHOLD the Master calleth me and I
 Would go ; hear ye His voice, sweet, soft and
 low
 As lilting bird ? Kind gods, fain would I go ;
 Hear ye that holiest name He calls me by,—
 "Friend" ? By that falling tear and nascent sigh,
 By all the loving sympathy you show
 Your own, let pass ; behold the porter throw
 The portal open ; I shall no more die,
 But shall be one with Him, even that He is
 In everlasting and in perfect life ;
 Sunder us not, we breathe a common breath ;
 Win holier issues for the world than this ;
 This is the pæan of my victory rife
 In love triumphant over sin and death.'

XII

‘ VICTORY at last, my years of weary fighting
All ended now and peace and freedom won,—
Peace which surpasseth earth’s all-vain delighting,
Freedom for the race God gave me to run.
Blessed Standard-bearer, swiftly I follow,
Moons cannot hinder the tide of my love ;
Airs of the summer-time, wings of the swallow,
Waft like down my soul to its nest above ;
Faith making buoyant, ev’n mountains surrender,
Veiling their peaks in the mists I have passed,
Sunlight I breathe, but a light yet more tender
Swathes and encircles my heavenly Friend ;
Is this death or heaven ? by Him holding fast,
I leave earth behind, endure to the end.’

THE CHURCH AND THE
WORLD



I

God mourned ; the brilliance of eternal light
Revealed His two proud eagles stooping sheer,
Seraphs pursuing seraphs far and near
Who bruised each other in convergent flight ;
Thus vanished many angels from Heaven's height ;
The psaltery, harp and flageolet clear
Of tuneful bands forsook the silent sphere
And God was hidden in a cloud from sight ;
Again He hears the heavens labour with sound,
Again each angel great in fleet flight swings,
Falls hellward, closely to his fellow bound
In liens of deadly combat till one brings
To hell the other. Then was God seen
crowned
To Whom the host of Heaven bare joyous wings.

II

To Lucifer who hastes to guide his star

Behold an imp lead forth a grizzled pate !

‘Wherefore thou here?’ quoth Lucifer irate ;

‘I ate a widow’s substance, to debar

Her sons from weal enticed to deeds which mar

The reason. Whither next?’ ‘To orb of fate ;

Each orb enspheres a soul, but th’ aggregate

Of the untenanted is endless. Far

From hence a satellite marks night from day.’

‘Inhabited?’ ‘Peace ! fool.’ ‘Cold, ah, bitter
cold.’

‘There is a comet due whereon a mad

Astronomer sent thither by the——’ ‘Hold !

I choose your moon.’ Him leads the imp
away,

Saying, ‘Come, I warm thy moon for thee, old
dad.’

III

A VOICE was heard out of Teutonic lands,
 'Warring must end; no trampled vineyards
 more

Nor tapestries aflame nor clots of gore
Flecking the village street; where Peace commands
Napoleons may not; who misunderstands

That word of nations let him pause before
It be re-said lest soon from stack to sewer
It thrill the cities, loose Abaddon's bands.'

In unison therewith ripe age has graved
Youth's shallow grooves more deeply in a man
To whom a day returns whereon with shout
A militant Calvinist stormed Heaven's redoubt,
Whilst on a distant road 'Germania saved'
Muttered the Man of Iron of Sedan.

IV

THERE raged a tumult in a city street,

A king was slain, toward the palace swayed

And surged a mob, some of whose leaders said

'Let us have kings no more, all are effete,

Destroy the crown, the royal sceptre and seat.'

But voices more exclaimed 'Should foes invade

Our land, without a royal leader blade

Would sleep in scabbard, we should court defeat.'

A prince, pallid and faint from wounds, passed by,

Whereat one raised the shout 'Behold your king,

Behold your king,' and sought to lay a hand

On him. But, passing quickly through that ring,

The prince was seen no more. Thus come
they nigh

The palace where reigned Death, king of the land.

V

THE moon of Earth, impassive, cold, looked down
On new-made graves ; her sovereign star red-brown
Waxed ruddier yet for very joy of health,
Its grass grew greener and at first by stealth,
Then undisguisedly the blades 'gan sway
In dance to a Piping Death who passed their way,—
A Death who piped, then, winnowing on the sod,
Scattered good wheat as well as chaff abroad.
Anon I saw a star from weeping red,—
From weeping blood and lo ! whenas it bled
The earth ensanguined with the blood it shed.
Did this befall because I dared not sleep
Or did the star a mourning vigil keep
Or a sad angel over heaven's wall weep ?

VI

WHY thus enshrouded sombrously, O God,
Who still designest worlds beyond our ken,
Of Thought almighty monarch? Lo! again
I, sinner, sin-begot, would cast this load
Of guilt before Thy throne, but only gaze
Into Thine eyes insoluble to find
An image of my own beclouded mind;
Loveless and hateless, with my erring ways
Concerning not Thyself and only kind
To Thy celestial heralds who Thee praise
Thou seem'st; wilt ne'er divide the lurid cloud
Nor flash therethrough in glory and in strength
Nor light me with Thy wisdom? Speak at length
An erring servant heareth, lowly bowed.

VII

AROUND the footstool of God's holy seat
 The noxious weeds of sin grew hurtfully,
 Crept ever closer to His holy feet
 And trespassed on His holy ecstasy ;
 Wayfaring men attend and mutely gaze
 Till He shall quell the insolence of sin,
 And lilies of the valley in amaze
 Droop low the mat of noxious weeds within ;
 Over the mound of infamy He bends,
 Beholds the lilies growing meekly there
 Whose odour is an offering in His sight,
 Straight plucks the flowers, with flowers of Eden
 blends,
 And, lest the earth should be no longer fair,
 Transforms the hurtful weeds to lilies white.

VIII

I WALKED at eve along a rocky path
And heard the sound of pawing on the floor
Of Earth, whereon I halt and hard before
Behold a rabbit stamping as in wrath ;
' Why tappest thou ? ' say I, ' what ! passion hath
Possessed thy breast ? ' ' I call the grubs
which bore,
The worms which crawl and all Earth's slimy
corps,
I call them all to curse thee, Man of Gath ' ;
To whom an asp, ' No son of Rephaim
He, but a holy child to feather and fleece
Sent by our Maker, therefore welcome him.'
Peace fell on all ; a turtle cooed and flew
Upon my shoulder, crooning notes of peace,
To which I answered ' Peace be unto you.'

SONNETS ROUNDELS AND
MADRIGALS

KEATS

THREE years I peer ahead and see arise
The morning, Keats, of thy centennial day,
Auroral youth, laureate in heaven for aye.
What strange celestial sight can e'er surprise
His gifted eyes alert to know the guise
And truth of beauty even in mortal clay ?
Life's spring alone he knew, nor the dismay
Foresaw of autumns harvested with sighs ;
Praise him on lute, poet of sunny climes,
Friend of all friendly gods whose alchemy will
Transmute our drossy lives, our tarnished times
Gild with fine gold ; remember we that still
His lore is archetypal and his mimes
Aye sport by running stream, in wood, on hill.

SPRING AND SUMMER

Two seasons of the year are gay and sweet,
 Bring mirth and the abandonment of books
 And plighted lovers lost in woodland nooks ;
First, Spring, when May kneeling at April's feet
Bids Winter quicker haste to her retreat ;
 Then swell the voices of the building rooks,
 Of wakened bees and of the brimful brooks ;
(Within one day the cyclic year complete)
The second, Summer, when the breeze, their life,
 Speeds o'er the fields till sundown ; then are
 seen
The earth enveloped in an argent net
And the moon rising starless, lone and yet
 More fair and wistful than the ball terrene,
Which, housing men, is conversant with strife.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

THROUGH all vicissitudes her Church remains
Jealous for Scotland's honour and her laws ;
Persist the plaintive notes ; the pleading pause
Of Martyrdom and Neot's still enchains
The Scottish ear. What though few stately fanes
Are hers ! what though no fragrant cloud in flaws,
Portentous, hides the pyx, anon withdraws,
Bearing sweet odours to the chapel's vanes !
The simple rite in elemental state
Presents to sinners all they need to ask,—
A guide to Heaven, a rest-house by the way,
Food from the Saviour, pass-word at the gate,
Strength for the struggle, courage for the task,
A faith-reviving portion day by day.

FOREBODINGS

By fountains cool on sultry day of summer
Which play with graceful archness in the pool
Of Neptune in a park than city dumber,—
By fountains cool

Whose spray bedews a cyclic plant, the full
Fresh odour is inhaled by youthful thumber
Of sibyl's book, prophetic of misrule,

Of Trochu holding converse with the mummer
Of hell anent a parley with a ghoul,
Of Rapine ringer and of Death a drummer
By fountains cool.

THE FRUITION OF A DESIRE

ALL my desire become a whirling spool
Tossed in Charybdis nears the vortex dire
Wherein may wreck wrath of Sicilian pool
All my desire ;

Love's oak has rootlets in abysmal mire,
Its trunk ascends through regions chaste and cool,
Its crown touches the empyrean fire ;

Take wing, Desire, shake off the drip of dool ;
Quake, Earth, and vanish, Pool of hate and ire ;
Grow, Oak, until shall reach fruition full
All my desire.

TRIBAL HUNTING SONG

FLEETER than flame is the heel of the hunter,
Swifter than emu when men are the game,
Foemen when fleeing of battle the brunt are
Fleeter than flame ;

Gentlest of creatures or brute none can tame,
Slay as ye list, for the ills which confront are
Hunger and sickness, in skirmishes shame ;

Speed the spear, prosper the waddy ; the grunter
Will clothe us, and feed us, whole we or maim ;
Spears of the hunter and waddies though blunt are
Fleeter than flame.

TITANIA is my queen,
Her realms my soul within
Consummate love attain,
Her regency unseen
Extends from heart to brain,
And ever shall remain
Inviolatè therein.

ALAS ! my laggard feet
Cannot contend with thine;
Shod with laughter, fleet,
Glistening with dew, divine ;
Swiftly dost thou outpace ;
The second place is mine,
To thee again the race ;
To me be Lethe's wine.

To Helicon but wend
That yet perennial youth
With mine may blend
In very truth ;
Bathe and drink,
Drink and lave,
The Fairy Queen
Is beauty's slave,
Helicon old age's grave ;
Be my lover, thou canst preen
Wings for a lover's flight ;
Lover, in my heart alight.

TOUCH with finger light
Heart distrust did blight ;
Healing beyond dream
Of Hygeia's art
Shall the touch impart ;
See the ugly breed
Incontinent recede ;
Doubt, distrust beseem
Never lover's heart.

LARKS carol on high
And in a lower place
Linnets take heart of grace
And swell the melody ;
The stationary sun
In meridional sky
Suspends his ecstasy
To hearken to each one ;
Sing and pray, sing and pray
With syrinx, throat or tongue ;
Although my heart is old to-day
The world's heart is young.

[SUNG TO A LINNET]

AWAY with incubi !
Brush cobwebs from the brain !
A reasoner art thou
And eminently sane ;
Thy duty is to sing
The song thy sires began
Before a Babylon was built,
Before Earth cradled Man ;
Birth-songs, death-songs,
All songs combine,
Mortal and angelic songs
Are contained in thine.

POEMS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

A BOY ABROAD

ITALIA, land of happiest illusion,
Fostered by clarity of sky and sea,
Amid the city's noises and confusion
In recollection I return to thee ;

And chiefly to that shore named Riviera,
Love-locked between blue sea and purple hill,
'Twixt frontier town and palmy Bordighera,
Where artists may in beauty revel still

For there new gleams of thought and feeling
Revealed the sense of wonderment in me,
Whilst, through my brain in measured cadence
stealing,
Crept the slow murmur of the midland sea.

Could I but find a modest habitation
In flowery olive-yard where cicads sleep,
The fairest flowers of my imagination
Might in the soil of Piedmont root more deep ;

There, weary heart and brain might fruit and
flourish

In golden pome and creamy bridal flower,—
Yield excellent, more meet to tend and cherish
Than is the poesy of languid hour ;

The changeful play of blue and green and yellow
From trellised vine and gnarly olive-tree,
From gustatory lemon, orange mellow,
Prolific waters of a tideless sea,

Delights my inner vision, re-created
By memory that the vista of my life
May be delight and softened sorrow mated
And intermingled in a curious strife

In childhood's days, sweet days returning never
But evanescent as the opal tints
Which sip the flowing flavour of a river
When in the west a lessening sunbeam glints.

A BOY IN PARIS

1867

THERE'S little chance that a youngster will see
the Emperor to-day,
For cuirassiers, lancers and zouaves, all in martial
array,
Soldiers, civilians and gendarmes, everyone stands
in his way.

Back he must trudge to Rue Racine on weary
young feet,
And he wishes he never had started in vain
pursuit of a treat,
But had stayed content where the *ouvriers* made
holiday in the street.

But stay! the crowd is halting, men gaze along
the *Route*,
'Twould seem as if they deemed there was matter
of moment afoot,—
An aide-de-camp approaching, perhaps a general
to boot.

Troops of horse ! an escort ! and the thousands
hush to hear

Martial music advancing, and at last the prospect
is clear

And all the soul of the boy is at once all eye or
all ear

For he sees the horses white, postilion handling
the rein,

And, not the Emperor only but actual Emperors
twain,

And one whose imperial star should rise over
thousands slain.

OLD RHYMES RECAST

I

HERE we come gathering nuts and haws
On a cold and frosty morning ;

The sober nuthatch hacks the nuts,—
No more his house adorning ;

The motley nutcracker hammers the nuts,—
The wily fowler scorning ;

The crafty squirrel stores the nuts
'Gainst Luna's winter horning ;

The may brought promise of food in store
When gossips should be corning ;

Its berries trimly deck our homes
And tell of Flora mourning.

II

LITTLE Mary sat a-weeping
On a bright summer day ;

Her father was a-sleeping,
On the stubble he lay ;

Her mother had been reaping
The barley all day ;

Came Gabriel down sweeping
On great van that way ;

Said he, ' There's joy in keeping
For you, weeping May ' ;

Mary's chicks 'gan a-peeping,
Her doves said their say ;

Came a playful cherub leaping,
 All joyous and gay ;

By-and-bye came a weeping
 Holy Infant's Yule-day.

A GOOD FRIDAY

BEFORE this broken body
Our broken vows we lay ;
We seek forth from this altar
By a new and hidden way
To find the bower of Jesus,—
Of the dear, dying, dead,
Mute friend of John and Mary
And Judah's fallen head.

Upon the altar lieth
A common bread ; the same
He in an upper chamber
Blessed so that it became
The food of Christian children
And a sufficient sign
Of the Creator's goodness
In Christ the Gift divine.

Illume our times, Immanuel,
Our faults and erring ways
Amend, direct, make better
The best of other days ;
Rekindle the old ardour
Of Alban wise and great
For equity and freedom
Within the island state.

A HOLY SATURDAY

OH ! 'twas Mary who had the little lamb
And she sewed it on a banner ;
A cross and staff on high it bore
In a becoming manner ;

The lamb was white, the banner green,
The cross was red,—was crimson,—
The holy cross the Holy Lamb
Should expiate our sins on ;

Ten thousand children followed hard
Upon the fatal pennon,
Their garments fluttered in the strong
Keen breezes of Plynlymmon ;

The hymns they sang were moist with tears
Which glistened like an apple,
Till, home arrived, Saint Peter preached
And Mary decked the chapel.

AN EASTER SUNDAY

ROSEATE cloud, which are rising
Through an east of azure sky,
Do you come from the land of the Saviour
Of nations? do you fly
From the cradle of the sunbeam
In the east where Christ was born?
Are you charged to bring glad tidings,
Roseate cloud of morn?

I ween you are tinged with heart's blood
Which dropped from Redeemer's cross
On the heads of son and mother
On a hill beside a fosse
And will sprinkle a dew of blessings
On a wilful mortal race,
On an earth waste, worn and sinful,
And on childhood's wistful face.

Alack ! you are paling and waning
In the light of a garish day
But the love of the Lover of children
Shall never pass away
Nor, whilst the ages linger
And the world flits like a shade,
Shall the love in the hearts of His people
Inconstant grow or fade.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS



AFTER CALVARY

A FRAGMENT

CHRIST walked forth (the feast was o'er)
Through fields of sprouting corn,
On every side around him lay
A motionless April morn ;

No sound was heard of bird or bee
The way He chose to pass
And morning breezes hardly stirred
The spires of pleasant grass ;

He loitered by a white-thorn bush,
He loitered by a black
And ever mused He as He went
Along the reapers' track.

Afar o'er fields of awnless grain
Hung an unshapely thing
Which from a bough of aspen tree
To and fro did swing.

At first look 'twas tattered rag
Or effigy to scare,
At the second look Judas it was,—
Ghastly, stark, and bare.

' Disciple mine, the devil's wile
Led thee to do amiss
And turned away from narrow way
Which leads to endless bliss.'

STANZAS ADDRESSED TO THE
LION SCULPTURED BY
THORWALDSEN

NOBLE old Lion,
Dying, not dead,
Whence came thy ancestors ?
Where wast thou bred ?
Didst thou in Medians' land
Or by the Indus strand
Or in Numidian sand
Hollow a bed ?

Not born but created
Camest thou forth
From lair in a sculptor's brain
Afar in the North ;
Minerva-like camest thou,
Child of Olympian's brow,
Perfect ev'n then as now,
Foremost in worth.

A SONG OF ESPOUSAL

UNROBE, O Adriatic,—
The finny swallows flutter
From arches under builded,—
Unrobe and in my eager soul
Merge thine,—a sapphire gilded
By sun Venetian,—let it be
Thine inmost soul, thyself in whole
Wherewith thou gladly gifest me,
O Love, O Sea.

Most gallant Bucentoro,
Stir thou and I together
The sheeny robe liquescent
Which heles an ocean's wonder
From prying winds labescent,
Which parts our lives asunder,
Which hides thy soul from mine, O Sea,
Thy love, thy secret soul from me,
Bridegroom and Sea.

VILLANELLE

TELL me, Marie, how to know
 Bitter March from May day
That more blithely we may go.

Swaying, swinging to and fro
 Boughs of March, which breezes fray,
Tell me, Marie, how to know.

Borrowed heart has March but no
 Borrowed heart has gentler May
That more blithely we may go.

Birds and flowers which see no snow
 March's fond allurements sway ;
Tell me, Marie, how to know

Your moods, whence come the tears which
 flow,
 Whither wing your sighs their way,
That more blithely we may go.

Give me all your heart aglow
 With song and blossom and its way
Tell me, Marie, how to know
 That more blithely we may go.

SPRING ODE

SWEET is the blending of seasons,
Joyous the carolling birds,
When Vertumnus, apt in love's treasons,
Joys in the frolicsome herds ;

Lambs skip to meet him arriving,—
A chaplet of flowers in his hair,—
Whilst violet with primrose is striving
To sweeten the jubilant air ;

He cometh as cometh the sunrise,
His footprints glitter like gold,
And Boreas, when Spring has begun, lies
Fettered in icy fold ;

A tuneful and hidden chorus
Of linnets encircles his ways ;
His sensible presence broods o'er us
And brightens the gloom of our days ;

The turbulent flow of the river,
The vales and their budding wealth,
Proclaim him the bountiful giver
Of life and of joy and of health ;

Anoint then our heads with thy gladness,
Vertumnus, god of the Spring,
Let sorrow and sighing and sadness
With the torpor of winter take wing.

LOVE SONG OF A FAUN

Low among the lilies,
 High amongst the hills,
Lies my love a-dreaming,
Lulled to sleep by teeming,
 Teeming mountain rills,—
Golden tresses gleaming
 'Mid the daffodils.

White among the lilies
 Are arms and shoulders bare ;
Adders, cease your creeping,
Sparrows, flit not peeping,
 Water voles, beware,—
Not your love the sleeping
 Nymph with golden hair.

Love among the lilies,
 Wake and hie thee home,

Lest Diana straying,
Stag or hunter slaying,
Take thee for her own
And, my heart dismaying,
Bid me dwell alone.

BUSH MELODY

BIRD afar, voice anear,—
A thickhead wakes and slumbers,
As in a trance to my ear
Telling dulcet numbers,—
One, two, three, seven,—
Never jar or jingle,—
Tale of rainbow, tale of heaven
And of fledglings in the dingle ;

Golden breast, seek rest,
Love to nest has led thee ;
Homeless voice, be the choice
Of the homeless soul that weds thee ;
Bird afar, voice anear,—
A thickhead wakes and slumbers,
As in a trance to my ear
Telling dulcet numbers.

A SONG OF CREATION

WAS it well, O Earth, that Logos bright
Propelled thee forth, new-made, in sight
Of æons all by strength of hand,—
Hurled thee forth to sway and swim
In the light of sun and gave command
To revolve in his light and to live through him,
To have motion and breath through him?

Not wholly ill ; not in dread, alone,
Nor with snares and pitfalls your pathway strewn,
But with sweet companionship of star
For thee and thee alone create
Thy steadfast progress naught can mar,—
Thy oceans subject as to Fate,
Subject to laws as stern as Fate ;

And every valley and hill rejoiced
When love and hate new beings voiced

To buoyant air, and far abroad
Wing fluttered and quivered fin,
And found a way and prepared a road
Whereon should travel a race akin
To angels, to æons akin.

Then came man to subdue thee, Earth ;
Yet not wholly subdue for seasons of dearth
Were thy answers to labour in sweat of brow
And thy fires and tremors wrought havoc upon
His cities. As of old, so now
The agelong conflict goes on and on,
The agelong conflict still goes on.

THE LAST WOOLLY RHINOCEROS

WITHIN his noisome cave
 'The woolly monster lay,
The steadfast spots of light
 Were the peep-holes of the day,
The company he kept
 Of Terror and Dismay ;

To pierce his hide in vain
 A lion and a pard
Had whetted tooth and claw,
 The brute they only scarred,
His mighty horn transfixed
 The cats rash and ill-starred.

Did opulence of blood
 Help him his kin outlast,—
A race in brutal strength
 And raven unsurpassed,—
Before him wastes of years,
 Behind, a gory past ?

Not so ; with mind perturbed
This morn the monster wakes ;
Creatures unknown before
Appeared in tangled brakes
And meadows lush and rank
Wherein his meal he makes

Yestreen ; erect were they
And stealthily they came,
And where they come they bring
Their servants Smoke and Flame,
Who awfully declare
The prowess of their name.

The air grows hard to breathe
Without the cave, within,
It stifles him, he gasps,
Chokes, swallows smoke-drift thin,
Flames follow smoke, he dies,
Snared in his proper gin.

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